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ABSTRACT

This study explored faculty views about a new concept, departmental vision. Since the literature presents many different views of what the term "vision" encompasses, this study sought to establish criteria useful in an academic setting. The study was conducted at a large midwestern public research university; data were collected through a series of semi-structured interviews with 32 faculty members, using subsets of research questions based upon A. Biglan's (1973) model of disciplinary cultures. Respondents first defined "departmental vision" and then responded to a "vision" handout suggesting nine characteristics. After considering the concept of "effective organizational vision," most respondents agreed that a concept of departmental vision could be applied to a higher education setting. Analysis of the interviews coupled with a review of the leadership literature led to three propositions concerning departmental vision. These include: (1) characteristics of an organizational vision; (2) the usefulness of departmental visions to center the work of academic apartments; and (3) the best timing for discussing departmental vision. Six appendixes summarize the decision criteria used, list the characteristics of the departments and respondents, list the 12 subgroup variables, and include a "vision" handout used in the research. A table lists the hierarchy of events that tend to prompt a discussion of departmental vision. (Contains approximately 70 references.) (CH)

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Exploring the Concept of Departmental Vision

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held in Memphis, Tennessee, October 31 - November 3, 1996. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

Exploring the Concept of Departmental Vision

Within the last decade, *vision* has become a popular idea in the business leadership literature. "If there is one thing on which almost all those who write about leadership agree, it is that successful leaders must have a vision and be able to communicate it to others" (Birnbaum, 1992, p. 25). Some people use vision as part of a transformational leadership strategy to create prosperous or quality-oriented organizations out of floundering and mediocre companies (Senge, 1990; Seymour, 1992). Their visions are symbols, ideal pictures of what their organizations could become if only everyone were to adopt a significant change in strategy. Other leaders use vision not as a transformational device but as an effective reminder of current institutional intent. Here, the vision represents the broad outline or perspective that needs to be recalled and embraced if the organization is to remain successful and distinctive. In either case, vision has become an accepted component of excellent leadership practice within the business world. Calls for visionary leadership can be heard also within the higher education literature. Although vision is frequently associated with presidential leadership, there are indications within the higher education literature that it could be a useful tool for academic departments.

Purpose of the Study

In this study, I investigated faculty views about a new concept, *departmental vision*. A departmental vision is the collective or shared vision that faculty have for their department's future. It is distinct from any personal visions or agendas faculty may have for themselves. The portion of the study I present here pursues several primary research questions. How do Departmental Executive Officers (DEOs), the formal administrative faculty leaders in academic departments, and their faculty colleagues define vision? Which aspects of a comprehensive definition of vision--based upon a thorough literature review--do they find relevant and critical? Do faculty think it would be useful to have a departmental vision? And, if so, how would it be useful?

A related set of research questions were designed to investigate possible subgroup differences among the faculty. For example, do DEOs and faculty from distinct disciplinary clusters have similar or disparate views about departmental vision? Do DEOs think differently about departmental vision than faculty who are not in that administrative role (non-DEOs)? Other subgroup variables include: academic rank, gender, tenure status, formal academic administrative experience, higher education experience, the size of the department, and the DEO's term length. My

objective was to determine whether faculty, in general, hold a common view of departmental vision or whether one or more of these subgroup variables influence faculty views.

Background Literatures

Leadership and Vision

Excellent leadership is critical to organizations of all types--business and educational, for-profit and non-profit. Leaders, more so than managers, are expected to concern themselves with their organizations' basic purposes, general direction, values, and culture (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Bergquist, 1993; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Schein, 1992; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). In particular, effective leaders are able to inspire their memberships to work toward common goals (Kouzes & Posner, 1987). The concept of vision fits well with the idea of leaders inspiring followers and it, too, is more often associated with leadership than with management (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Snyder, Dowd, & Houghton, 1994; Westley & Mintzberg, 1988). In fact, the ability to work with vision is considered a key leadership competency (Bennis, 1989; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 1987, 1990; Peters, 1987; Sashkin, 1988; Schein, 1992; Senge, 1990; Snyder et al., 1994; Westley & Mintzberg, 1988).

Numerous authors emphasize the underlying purpose of transformational leadership--fostering change (Bass, 1988, 1990; Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989; Cameron & Ulrich, 1986; Conger, 1988; Conger & Kanungo, 1988b; House, Woycke, & Fodor, 1988; Howell, 1988; Kirby, Paradise, & King, 1992; Lucas, 1994; Seagren, Creswell, & Wheeler, 1993; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). Moreover, they argue that "articulating a vision" is a necessary component or step in the change process (Cameron & Ulrich, 1986; Kirby, Paradise, & King, 1992; Seagren et al., 1993). Consequently, transformational visions typically outline a new strategy by depicting "altered perceptions, attitudes, and commitments" (Bensimon et al., 1989, p. 40).

Charismatic leadership, a special form of transformational leadership, also utilizes vision as part of change strategy (Bass, 1988, 1990; Conger & Kanungo, 1988a, b). Charismatic leaders tend to exude confidence and a sense of purpose. They typically provide followers with "a vision of the future that promises a better and more meaningful way of life" (House et al., 1988, p. 101). Their goal is to have followers who are enthusiastic, feel empowered, and who are strongly committed to group activities.

Schein (1992) raises an extremely important point about the development of vision--leaders are not necessarily the sole authors of an organization's vision. "In our obsession with leadership vision, we may have made it possible for learning leaders to admit that their vision is not clear and that the whole organization will have to learn together" (p. 383).

Although appearing less frequently within the higher education literature, vision is also considered an important academic leadership tool (Birnbaum, 1992; Riggs & Akor, 1992; Seagren et al., 1993). Most of these references have focused on the role of the president and other top academic administrators. Of note, there has been a call for transformational, visionary leadership (Meredith & Wunsch, 1991; Seagren et al., 1993). Bensimon et al., (1989, p. 74), for example, report that many colleges are desperately seeking "leaders with a vision who are not satisfied with the status quo--leaders who are unafraid of change and have the power and wherewithal to transform their organizations." Furthermore, Riggs and Akor (1992, p. 66) also found in a recent survey that most department chairs agree that "a reasonably clear and articulated vision of what the institution is to become" is important to the planning process.

Yet transformational leadership is perhaps not right for higher education. Even though it enjoys some rhetorical support, "it is an approach that in many ways may not be compatible with the ethos, values, and organizational features of colleges and universities" (Bensimon et al., 1989, p. 74). Birnbaum (1992, p. 29) asserts that transformational leadership is an anomaly in higher education because the "goals and enduring purposes of an academic institution are likely to be shaped by its history, its culture, and the socialization and training of its participants, rather than by an omnipotent leader...." Furthermore, since the faculty culture within higher education prizes participative leadership, the preferred outcomes of transformational leadership must be desired by most faculty, or leadership will be hindered (Khan & Vuicich, 1984, p. 159). Given these qualms, the need to investigate faculty views about departmental vision becomes clear.

Partial Definitions of Vision

The understanding of the term vision that emerges from the literature is somewhat nebulous. Only two pairs of authors offer succinct--but not comprehensive--definitions of vision. Bennis and Nanus (1985, p. 89) argue that a "vision articulates a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization, a condition that is better in some important ways than what now exists." Kouzes and Posner (1987, p. 85) define a "vision as an ideal and unique image of the future."

Despite the paucity of formal definitions, a number of scholars have partially defined the term vision while discussing various aspects of what they consider "effective" visions. I was able to construct a more detailed and comprehensive definition of vision out of the many partial understandings that different authors present. Based upon the literature, I initially speculated that an ideal vision or "an effective vision" would contain the following elements:

1. It Is A Mental Image: it is a mental image (Creswell, Wheeler, Seagren, Egly, & Beyer, 1990); a dreaming or imaginative conceptualization (Gmelch & Miskin, 1993); a mental picture, an image, a visual metaphor, a conceptualization, an impression or abstraction (Bass, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 1987); a picture (Lucas, 1994; Senge, 1990; Snyder et al., 1994); an image, a picture, a conceptual framework or paradigm, a dream (Tichy & Devanna, 1986); a model or prototype (Kouzes & Posner, 1990); like a map (Sowell, 1987); an image of the mind (Howell, 1988).

2. It Is Future Oriented: it is a view of the future, future oriented or a thinking ahead (Gmelch & Miskin, 1993); it describes a future state (Bass, 1990; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Cameron & Ulrich, 1986; Conger & Kanungo, 1988a; Creswell et al., 1990; House et al., 1988; Lucas, 1994; Senge, 1990; Tichy & Devanna, 1986); it prepares for the future (Peters, 1987); at some point in the future (Tichy & Devanna, 1986); it's forward-looking (Kouzes & Posner, 1987); a future, something to be achieved (Snyder et al., 1994); possible outcome [in the future] (Bass, 1988).

3. Yet, It Is Built On The Present: it is not inconsistent with the present (Gmelch & Miskin, 1993); a picture both of the future and of the present, an extension of the present (Snyder et al., 1994); it is grounded in the college as it presently exists (Birnbaum, 1992); it assesses the current reality (Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

4. It Describes Something Attractive And Better: it is desirable (Bass, 1990; Creswell et al., 1990); a desired state, excellence, an ideal, in some way better (Tichy & Devanna, 1986); inspiring or nearer to the ideal (Gmelch & Miskin, 1993); attractive or better in some important way (Bennis & Nanus, 1985); attractive, desirable, a standard of excellence or an ideal (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, 1990); if it were all things [we] want it to be (Lucas, 1994); appealing or better (Snyder et al., 1994); attractive (Bass, 1988); better and more meaningful (House et al., 1988); motivating (Westley & Mintzberg, 1988); idealized goal (Conger & Kanungo, 1988a).

5. Yet, It Also Highlights What Is Important Or Distinctive: it refers to what is unique (Gmelch & Miskin, 1993); a guide to what is important (Tucker, 1992); a focus on values, guiding principles and distinctive competencies or what makes your institution or program distinctive (Seymour, 1992); a quality of uniqueness or what sets us apart (Kouzes & Posner, 1987); strongly held values, ideals, and aspirations (Bass, 1988); what is right, good, and important (Bass, 1990); principles

(Cameron & Ulrich, 1986); what the organization is trying to accomplish and what it stands for (Snyder et al., 1994); ideological terms (Howell, 1988).

6. It Motivates And Empowers People: it is aimed at empowering our own people first, customers second (Peters, 1987); brings about a confidence on the part of the employees (Bennis & Nanus, 1985); attracts and energizes people or motivates through identification (Bennis, 1989); a vision motivates because it provides a challenge (Lucas, 1994); envisioning is the basis for empowering others (Bass, 1990); employees can be empowered, it affirms the value of every contribution (Snyder et al., 1994); it releases the energy needed to motivate, it makes the pain of changing worth the effort, it inspires, an emotional appeal (Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

7. It Is Realistic And Credible: it is possible (Bass, 1988; Creswell et al., 1990); realism or within reach (Tucker, 1992); realistic or credible (Bennis & Nanus, 1985); it fits with reality (Tichy & Devanna, 1986); can one day be made real (Kouzes & Posner, 1987); envisioning integrates what is possible and what can be realized (Bass, 1990); a natural, rational extension of what the future should and could look like (Snyder et al., 1994).

8. It Is Both Specific And General: it is specific enough to act as a tie breaker and general enough to leave room for taking of bold initiatives (Peters, 1987); in twenty words or less, What makes us distinctive? (Seymour, 1992).

9. And, It Is Malleable: it must be stable but constantly challenged and changed at the margin (Peters, 1987); expect parts of the vision to undergo alteration, but the essence of it will remain intact (Snyder et al., 1994); adaptability to new conditions and to new problems (Bass, 1990); visions as an evolving phenomenon (Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

The term *shared vision* appears less frequently than *vision* within the leadership literature. In its simplest form, a vision becomes a shared vision when it is accepted and embraced by more than one person. Typically, however, scholars discuss shared vision as if it were *the* vision to which the majority of organizational members subscribe. For example, Bennis and Nanus (1985) argue that a shared vision grows out of the needs of the entire organization and is "claimed" or "owned" by all the important actors. Senge (1990, p. 206) is more cautious, he suggests that a "shared vision is a vision that *many* people are truly committed to, because it reflects their own personal vision" [italics added]. It is probably safe to assume, though, that most leaders (or would-be leaders) would like their vision

to become the primary shared vision within their unit, department or organization.

The term shared vision was critical to my study because it laid the foundation for one of the questions I wished to investigate. Is a collective or shared vision desirable at the academic department level? (Henceforth, I shall refer to this type of vision as departmental vision.)

Vision at the Academic Department Level

Although most writing about vision is centered at the institutional level, vision can be used at any level within the organization (Peters, 1987). It is the leader's job to work with everyone to develop and instill a philosophy and vision. Kouzes and Posner (1987, p. 91) add that uniqueness is also the way "smaller units within large organizations can have their own vision while still being encompassed by the corporate vision." Each unit or department, therefore, can have a distinctive vision of its own future while still working toward the common future of the larger organization.

Indeed, academic leaders besides the president do employ vision. Gmelch and Miskin (1993) recognize the value of a departmental vision, but note that the chair's role in creating this vision is not clear. A few writers seem to imply that departmental executive officers (DEOs) have primary responsibility for developing and articulating their departmental visions (Carroll & Gmelch, 1994; Creswell et al., 1990; Hickson & Stacks, 1992; Lucas, 1994; Smith, 1992). However, other scholars warn that DEOs should avoid developing and imposing their own personal vision on the department. Instead, it would be preferable to have DEOs work in concert with faculty to develop a departmental vision (Deetz, 1992; Gmelch & Miskin, 1993; Roach, 1976; Seagren et al., 1993).

With the exception of the studies just mentioned, vision, *per se*, is rarely discussed within the departmental leadership literature. Instead, its potential usefulness must be inferred from discussions in other topic areas (e.g., the chair's leadership duties, mission statements, goal setting, planning responsibilities). Read as a whole, these writings imply that faculty generally expect their DEOs to be involved--to some degree--in planning for, and articulating, their department's future (Deetz, 1992; Dressel, Johnson, & Marcus, 1970; Falk, 1979; Gmelch & Miskin, 1993; Hammons, 1984; Heimler, 1967; Kenny, 1982; Tucker, 1984, 1992; Wildavsky, 1992; Wolansky, 1978).

Disciplinary Cultures

Disciplinary cultures, the primary source of a professor's identity and expertise, are purported to evoke the greatest meaning, commitment, and loyalty from contemporary faculty (Bergquist, 1992; Dill, 1982; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Stoecker, 1993). Several of the disciplinary culture's most influential shared

assumptions include: what is worth knowing, how knowledge is created, which tasks should be performed, standards for effective performance, codes of conduct, as well as acceptable patterns of professional interaction and publication (Becher, 1981; Dressel et al., 1970). Scholars assert that disciplinary culture affects the DEO's role, too, by creating expectations and judgments about appropriate leadership behavior (Booth, 1982; Bragg, 1980; Chemers, 1984; Seagren et al., 1993). Disciplinary cultures, in turn, are shaped by other variables such as institutional type, size of the college and department, or collective bargaining status (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Whitson & Hubert, 1982).

Since disciplinary culture exerts a great deal of influence over faculty, it is an important variable to consider for research projects involving academics. Anthony Biglan's (1973) work, in particular, has been the foundation for a growing body of literature about disciplinary cultures. Biglan developed a model based upon three dimensions: the degree to which a paradigm exists; the degree of concern with application; and, the concern with life systems. The model clustered thirty-six academic areas into eight groupings (See Appendix A). Biglan discovered that these three dimensions appear to characterize the subject matter of academic areas in most institutions. From his initial findings, Biglan hypothesized that academic disciplines have distinct properties which direct the way faculty from different disciplines conduct research, teaching, service, and administrative duties. Furthermore, as Booth (1982, p. 11) suggests, there is reason to believe that "the consensus that exists around the goals of groups of academic disciplines spills over into consensus or conflict with regard to departmental management."

Several researchers have tested the model on DEOs (Carroll, 1991; Carroll & Gmelch, 1994; Creswell, Seagren, & Henry, 1980; Smart & Elton, 1976). What these findings seem to imply is that each disciplinary culture can produce different faculty expectations of the DEO's role. Faculty and DEOs from different academic families (or Biglan clusters, in this case) may hold varying opinions about the policies and procedures related to the selection, professional development, and evaluation of DEOs. They may hold different opinions about how much time DEOs should ideally devote to the numerous management tasks involved in running a department. And, in light of this study, they may feel more comfortable with DEOs who adopt a certain leadership style when discussing and envisioning their department's future.

Cultural influences, therefore, would seem to bear on issues of departmental vision in several ways. The disciplinary culture, in particular, tends to evoke the greatest meaning, commitment, and loyalty from the faculty. And, as the literature of Bragg (1980) and Chemers (1984), for example, indicates, disciplinary culture can also affect role expectations for DEOs. Because disciplinary culture is such a powerful influence, I

introduced Biglan's (1973) model of academic clusters as an appropriate theoretical base for distinguishing among selected disciplines.

Summary Comments About the Literature

The concept of vision--as it is currently used within the business and leadership literatures--is still fairly new. Scholars argue that envisioning the future is an important leadership competency, particularly for transformational leaders. Having a vision helps center organizational efforts and it keeps people directed toward common goals. It is also a necessary component of change strategies. Furthermore, visions can be beneficial at any level of an organization, and in any kind of a subunit.

There are also indications that vision is important within American higher education settings, but it remains a fairly unexplored topic. This is particularly true at the academic department level, the home for disciplinary faculty. Vision, *per se*, is mentioned rarely in the literature about academic departments. Despite this, faculty recognize the importance of having a departmental game plan (or departmental vision) above and beyond their individual dreams. They periodically set goals and make long-term plans for their departments. And, as many higher education scholars assert, faculty usually expect their DEOs to lead these planning sessions.

In the research presented here, I explore faculty views about departmental vision. How do faculty define the concept of vision and do they perceive that a departmental vision can be useful? And, since faculty are greatly influenced by their disciplinary cultures, do their views about departmental vision vary by disciplinary affiliation?

Methodology

Selecting a Site

I concluded that the best "type" of higher education institution for this study would be a large research university with strong disciplinary cultures and a wide assortment of academic departments. I selected The University of Iowa, a large Midwestern public research university (Carnegie classification Research University I). This institutional type is particularly advantageous because faculty at research universities, regardless of the specific location of their academic appointment, are more likely to think of themselves as disciplinary scholars than are colleagues at other institutional types. Moreover, as Becher (1989, p. 3) argued, leading research departments "most clearly delineate and embody the central values of the discipline." Therefore, if faculty opinions on the topic of departmental vision *do* vary by disciplinary culture, it should be easier to

uncover these differences at an institutional type known for having strong disciplinary cultures.

Selecting the Academic Departments

Since one research objective was to uncover and examine faculty subgroup differences, I wanted to include respondents from several very different types of departments. Therefore, I used Biglan's underlying theory and a set of decision criteria (See Appendix B) to select the first-choice and alternate departments for seven of the sample departments (i.e., HNP, HNA, HLP, SNP, SNA, SLP, SLA).

Unfortunately, there were no comparable departments in Biglan's Hard-Life-Applied (HLA) cluster at the University of Iowa. Those scientific fields (e.g., Agronomy, Dairy Science) are housed at a sister institution, Iowa State University. Rather than confound the study by adding one department from another institution, I decided to abandon the HLA cluster. To compensate partially for the loss of this cluster, I added an eighth department to the study. However, I wanted this new department (Code = XXX) to be sufficiently different from those already found in the Biglan clusters. Using the aforementioned decision criteria, I selected a first-choice and alternate XXX department. See Appendix C for a description of the sample departments.

On a related note, Stoecker (1993) recently extended Biglan's work by classifying two previously unclassified disciplines: Nursing (SLA) and Dentistry (HNA). Although she also investigated eight other disciplines, she was unable to classify any more because of mixed results. This was good news for my study, though, because both my first-choice and alternate XXX departments fell into Stoecker's *un*classified group. The XXX department, then, would be a suitable comparison department since it is sufficiently distinct from the other seven.

Selecting the Respondents

I was interested particularly in two faculty characteristics (or variables) as a basis for selecting respondents: departmental administrative experience, and higher education experience as a faculty member. My first priority was to include some faculty with departmental administrative experience. I wondered, for instance, if current DEOs thought differently about departmental vision than their faculty peers. Therefore, I decided to include the DEOs from the eight first-choice departments. Fortunately, all eight DEOs agreed to participate.

My second priority was to acquire additional faculty with varying amounts of higher education experience. I was curious whether faculty with more years of experience thought differently about departmental vision than those who are newer to the profession. I reasoned that if I designed the study to include faculty from each of the three academic ranks, the final

respondent pool should be sufficiently diverse with respect to higher education experience. After obtaining accurate faculty lists (1994-1995) for the eight academic departments, I used a stratified, random sampling method to draw a pool of potential respondents. The final respondent pool consisted of thirty-two faculty members: eight DEOs, and twenty-four additional faculty--one assistant, one associate, and one full professor from each department. See appendix D for a more detailed description of the respondents.

Eight faculty declined to participate in the study so I interviewed their randomly-selected alternates instead. The nonrespondents offered a variety of reasons for declining. Fortunately, there were no obvious patterns (e.g., by reason for declining, gender, academic rank, department) to indicate a problem with representativeness.

Data Collection and Analysis

A naturalistic or qualitative method of data collection seemed appropriate for an exploratory project of this nature.[1] I conducted semi-structured interviews, which balanced the need for some consistency without being too restrictive. I analyzed the interview data two ways. First, I followed Strauss and Corbin's (1990) guidelines and looked for main themes and categories. I then developed tentative propositions based upon the central tendencies of the entire group. The development of propositions is the first phase of theory development.[2] Second, I sorted the data by different key variables to uncover any unusual subgroup responses. The twelve characteristics or variables I used for the subgroup analyses are described in Appendix E. Surprisingly, though, the faculty presented remarkably comparable views when they defined vision, responded to the vision handout, and discussed whether departmental visions would fit into their departmental cultures or not. Other than a few minor exceptions noted below, there were no subgroup trends in this portion of the research project. However, in the second half of this project--when respondents discussed vision development and articulation--there were a variety of issues raised and some subgroup trends were apparent (Cunneen, 1995).

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[1]Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 19) have argued that qualitative methods can be useful "to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known." Clearly, this applies to vision within academia.

[2]As Tesch (1991, p. 23) noted, "a single research project does not produce an entire social theory, but it can develop a set of theoretical propositions." Since this was only an exploratory project, it would be unrealistic to expect that a fully-formed theory might emerge out of these data.

Results

Extemporaneous Definitions of Vision

I asked respondents to share their thoughts about the phrase *effective organizational vision*. (I selected this phrase because many leadership scholars who write about vision frequently use this terminology.) In particular, though, I asked them to focus on the word *vision*. I wanted to know how they would define vision before we discussed what the leadership scholars were saying about the concept. Thirty respondents agreed to share their impromptu definitions of vision, two people politely declined to answer this question. Overall, their comments tended to fall into five categories.

First, the respondents offered *synonyms* for the word vision. Fourteen respondents began their definition by offering synonyms most of which were connected to the idea of planning. The underlying theme of their responses was that an effective vision serves as a master plan or guiding policy for an organization. For example, it is a "coherent plan for the future," "long-range planning," "a kind of master scenario," or an "agenda." Furthermore, they emphasized the need for careful reflection during the vision creation stage. "In other words, I see vision as long-range planning and thinking about alternatives and thinking about the pros and cons of different alternatives." Two people also remarked that they thought of the University's strategic planning process when they heard the word vision. A third person, however, disagreed strongly with that notion. And, only one respondent equated the idea of vision with an organization's mission statement.

Second, they focused on the importance of the *content* of a vision. Twenty respondents discussed the core contents of what should be included in an effective organizational vision. Their suggestions, however, were extremely general and categorical in nature. No one offered specific examples. The faculty indicated that an effective vision would include clear organizational goals. "You set some kind of goals," "the things you want to accomplish, and a sense of how you want to get them done." Moreover, a well-formulated vision would depict a preferred end state. For instance, several respondents remarked that organizational members who are attempting to create a vision need to ask themselves: "What do we want to be?" "Where do we want to go?" and "What areas are we going to focus on?" The vision, therefore, would hopefully answer these questions. A few other faculty members suggested that an effective vision might also contain references to the organization's official mission or key values. They were careful not to equate a mission statement with vision, though. Rather, they suggested that portions of a mission statement could be worked into a departmental vision.

Third, they mentioned that visions imply a *future time frame*. Fifteen respondents made some reference to a future time

frame in their definitions. Sample comments included, "with an eye toward the future" or "I think of a coherent plan for the future." About half of the group who made a reference to time, favored a long-term perspective. "It has to be long term. If it's short term, if it's the typical thing that one sees currently in business and politics, the next quarter--I don't see that as vision." In contrast, two people stated that a short-term perspective is beneficial. "But, I guess, it's most useful to me to think about it in terms of relatively short-term strategies for moving an organization in a particular, positive direction." Five respondents reasoned that the time frame could be adjusted to fit the organization's needs. "Well, I suppose you could think of short-term vision and long-term vision." They were adamant, though, that vision needs to cover "some defined period of time."

Fourth, they shared *goals and tips* about various aspects of the vision process. Twenty people spoke of important goals and tips to consider when creating or implementing an organizational vision. A few people had several suggestions each. Here is a selection of their thoughts.

Four faculty members indicated that the vision must be a shared vision; something that the majority of the organizational members could enthusiastically endorse. How the shared vision would be developed--whether it begins with one person, a small group, or is mutually developed by everyone--was not discussed. Instead, these respondents focused on the end goal, group ownership of the vision. "I guess it's a vision everybody could buy into, and work towards together. Certainly without which you're not going to have much effectiveness." A different set of four respondents asserted that the organizational vision should represent an improvement over current conditions. "And so, our vision usually is associated with selecting those focus areas, and then attempting to make some improvement in those areas and become better."

Three people declared that it is best if the vision remains idealistic. "It's something to work toward." It is a vision "that we don't really expect to see." Two others partially concurred; they suggested that an effective organizational vision could combine both idealistic and realistic elements. It is "based on dreaming and reality." "I see the vision as being the combination of the two. And in fact, I think there is a dynamic between the two that you really need to have."

Three respondents suggested that organizational members need to gather information to better anticipate future needs and conditions. "Maybe you'd like to have foresight into the future. But, that's pretty hard to come by. But you need the demographics of what the future is going to hold for you."

Two faculty members said that visions should evolve so organizations can remain on the cutting edge. It is "kind of a moving target" and "one must continually change with it." In a

somewhat related vein, two other respondents noted that "vision means change of some sort." Furthermore, regardless of the chosen shared vision, at least part of the organization must remain free to be innovative. In other words, for an organization to remain vital some members must explore the available alternatives and be "aggressive and risk-taking."

And fifth, they spoke of an *action* component which ought to be included in visions. Eight respondents argued that an effective organizational vision should include (or be followed up with) an action or implementation component. Once the organization or group has decided upon a vision, there must be strategies "for meeting those objectives." You have to have "a sense of how you want to get them done. This may include setting up "an organizational structure" and discussing everyone's roles in achieving the vision. In other words, it's not enough to have a vision, the group must also make "appropriate plans" and institute "the appropriate behavioral changes" to obtain that vision.

The respondents' impromptu definitions of vision were close enough to discussions within the literature to indicate that the faculty and I were thinking about the same concept.

Reactions to the Vision Handout

After the respondents concluded their informal definitions, I asked them to review the vision handout (See Appendix F), a compilation of what the leadership scholars are saying about effective organizational visions. I added that the nine points were roughly in the order of how frequently they appeared in the leadership literature. I asked each respondent: "Should anything be added to the list? Should anything be deleted? Or, does anything just strike you as odd?"

Everyone agreed to read and evaluate the handout. The majority of the respondents preferred to review the handout systematically, discussing each point in turn. A few faculty members singled out their "best" and "worst" items, and then gave blanket approval to the remaining points. Sometimes a respondent hesitated over an item or appeared reluctant to criticize a point. In that situation, I invited the person to elaborate. I stated that it would help me to know where the faculty not only agreed, but disagreed with the leadership scholars. This usually elicited further comments.

As a whole, the respondents approved of the vision handout. For example, even the component "motivates and empowers," which received the lowest approval rating, had only two respondents voting to drop the item and three faculty members being undecided. Since a summary, item by item, of their response rates, concerns and typical suggestions is available elsewhere (Cunneen, 1995), I will not cover those results again. Instead, the following comments focus on their "additional ideas" for improving the definition of organizational vision.

Most respondents spoke as if their suggestions could be incorporated into the existing nine items on the handout, although some liked the idea of adding a tenth or eleventh point. In particular, two ideas had enough support to warrant further discussion.

The first is that visions should have an "idealistic" component. Several respondents believed that an effective vision is somewhat out of reach, a touch utopian. The vision would describe an end point which organizational members hope to approach, but never expect to attain fully. Nine respondents, eight of whom were non-DEOs, wanted this idea worked into the vision handout. The soft, life, and pure departments were somewhat over-represented in this little group, while full professors were under-represented.

A second point was also interesting, but not as popular. Five people discussed the importance of recognizing how an organization's "past" affects both present conditions and possible future directions. Past decisions shape organizations in many ways. They affect production options, the selection of primary goals, the organization's culture and traditions, and so on. As one faculty member put it, "I believe our ideas about the present and the future are built on the past." This small subgroup of respondents suggested that knowing one's past helps to understand the present, which also may aid in selecting a more appropriate organizational vision. Of the five, four were full professors with some administrative experience, and at least seventeen years experience as faculty members.

A Revised Definition of Vision

In recent years, leadership scholars have customarily defined *vision* in a circuitous fashion. They have discussed what successful, transformational leaders have found useful when orchestrating a major organizational change. In doing so, these scholars have implied there might be standard components of an "effective organizational vision." To my knowledge, however, no one has yet consolidated these ideas. The following proposition is a working definition which is based upon the leadership literature, feedback from this group of respondents, and my own judgment.

Proposition #1: An Organizational Vision ...

1. Is a mental image or model
2. Which is future oriented
3. But also takes into account past and present circumstances.
4. It describes something attractive, better or necessary for the organization's survival.
5. It may build on existing values and distinctive qualities, highlight key aspects of a new direction, or contain elements of both.

6. It is a shared vision, endorsed by a critical majority, which motivates and empowers organizational members.
7. It is realistic and credible, yet also somewhat idealistic.
8. It is primarily a general strategy, yet may include some specific goals and tactics.
9. It can be flexible or adaptable, given a major change in circumstances.

Introducing a New Concept: Departmental Vision

The Usefulness of Departmental Vision

The primary rationale for asking faculty members to define vision, and then to react to the vision handout, was to reach a common understanding about the meaning of the concept. Once this groundwork was established, I shifted the focus of our discussion. I asked respondents to consider vision within a higher education setting, specifically within their own academic departments. I wanted to know how the idea of having a departmental vision might fit into the culture of their departments, their disciplines, if at all.

Their opinions fell into three distinct categories. Twenty-five respondents supported the idea enthusiastically, six people were uncertain or had mixed reactions, and one person clearly thought that vision at the departmental level would not be useful.

Twenty-five faculty members stated with little hesitation that a departmental vision would be useful for their units. Although the respondents' nomenclature varied, their affirmation was comparable. Here is a representative sample of their affirmative responses: "definitely," "it makes sense," "you have to," "absolutely," "it's imperative," "we need to spend more time at it," "it fits in well here," "it fits beautifully," "it's a useful exercise," "it's healthy and it's wise," "we're always thinking about it," "it's useful for any sized organization and any type of an organization," "it's critical," "the answer is clearly yes," "it is real important," "we should be constantly talking about it," "it's incredibly useful," "it's absolutely essential," and "you can't operate without one." The majority of the respondents in this study clearly argued that having a departmental vision would be advantageous.

More often than not, the respondents went on to outline the benefits of having a departmental vision. To put it briefly, they indicated that an effective departmental vision would help keep departmental efforts proactive and centered. This large subgroup of respondents also implied that a departmental vision is an essential, not optional, element for successful academic departments. They said, for example, "I don't think any organization can operate without vision" and "I think the department's going to die without vision." A proactive stance is also important. "We need to anticipate the changes and develop a

plan" "You have to make choices about where you want to locate your strengths." Moreover, it was not uncommon to hear, "We need to decide what we will be, where we will go, how to get there." Once those decisions are made, the respondents indicated that the departmental vision becomes "a driving force or a reference point for decisions." The departmental vision helps keep the unit "centered on where we want to go."

Six respondents, four of whom were tenured full professors with twenty-three or more years experience, partially supported the idea of a departmental vision. These respondents testified that a departmental vision could be somewhat useful, given the proper conditions or circumstances. Generally, the people in this second subgroup were mo e reserved in their endorsement than the first subgroup. Also, they were more likely to send out mixed signals. Several respondents, for example, initially said that a departmental vision might be advantageous but then proceeded to spend more time delimiting its usefulness. A few faculty members were candid about their cynicism, yet were hesitant to dismiss the idea of departmental vision entirely. Their uncertainty came primarily from two sources: negative experiences with the University's strategic planning process; and, from the belief that visions are more important to members of the corporate world than to academics.

And finally, one tenured professor reasoned that vision at the departmental level would not be very useful. This faculty member said repeatedly, "I tend not to think in terms of vision at the departmental level at all." Instead, he thinks "in terms of maintenance rather than vision." He states, however, that vision still has a role within higher education. "I think it would be much more important to have a vision for a huge institutional body...." In departments, though, "individual visions are a higher priority." The faculty member concluded, "And so, when I think about vision, I think of scale."

(Note: At this point in the interviews, most respondents were using my coined phrase, departmental vision, with ease.)

Proposition #2: Departmental visions are beneficial; they help center the work of academic departments.

The Timing and Subject Matter of Discussions

One of the benefits of using a semi-structured interview format is that respondents have more freedom to direct the conversation. In this study, it was soon evident that most respondents were answering several *un*asked questions. Specifically, "When are discussions likely to take place?" And, "What topics or issues tend to be considered?" The faculty often addressed those questions while discussing the usefulness of a departmental vision.

Two opportunistic times to discuss departmental vision stand out. The first is when faculty members share a sense of urgency about a particular issue and determine it is necessary to discuss it as a community. Nine faculty members, for example, offered unsolicited comments like, "Unless there's a real perceived need, very little is likely to happen." They indicated that calls for strategic plans and calls for vision--when there is no perceived need--generally do not mean much. As one person noted, "Those are the kinds of things I tend to shove in a drawer and never again consult." Several respondents remarked that their colleagues ordinarily would not have the time or inclination to sit down and say, "OK, what's my vision for the next ten years?" Nevertheless, if confronted by a crisis or pressing issue, they might be willing to solve the immediate problem while also considering the broader ramifications of how it might alter the departmental vision. The compelling issue, then, becomes the point of departure for a dialogue about departmental vision.

A second advantageous time to the discuss departmental vision is when a natural opportunity arises during the regular course of academic life. In American research universities, for example, faculty members are customarily involved in academic planning and decision making, especially at the departmental level. They expect to debate and decide many routine academic matters throughout the year. In this study, one person captured the group's thoughts rather well. He said, "We do [discuss departmental vision], you know. We do it. But, we do it when it makes sense." For most of these respondents it makes sense to discuss departmental vision when they are already participating in some form of academic decision making.

Proposition #3: The best time to discuss departmental vision is when the faculty perceives a need to do so or a natural opportunity arises in the cycle of university life.

Thirty respondents, all but two, also offered unsolicited information about the typical issues or events which tend to prompt a discussion of departmental vision (See Table 1). For instance, twenty-four respondents from all different faculty subgroups volunteered that a debate about curricular and teaching issues can lead to a discussion of departmental vision. Eighteen respondents suggested that another natural opportunity would be when there is an occasion to hire a new faculty member. It is almost automatic to consider how well each candidate's expertise might contribute to the departmental vision. Faculty from pure departments were over-represented in this subgroup, while full professors and faculty from very large departments were somewhat under-represented.

(Table 1 about here)

On a related note, the respondents also stated or implied that many of the issues in Table 1 were actually themes within their own departmental visions. Moreover, as members of a university faculty, they would expect to participate in deciding these and other related academic issues. As one astute respondent concluded, a departmental vision takes many forms. "What sort of students do we want to attract to our school? What sort of curriculum do we want to offer them? What sort of faculty do we need to do that? And, what sort of expectations do we have for the faculty?" It is not surprising that departmental visions would contain a curricular theme. Fourteen respondents also proposed another issue which faculty members at a research university ought to consider--their duty to discover and disseminate new knowledge. Consequently, an additional theme is the future research activities of the department. One respondent suggested that each department should routinely consider, "What are we going to be interested in five years from now?" Men, assistant professors, and untenured faculty from hard and pure departments were over-represented in this subgroup. Women, associate professors, and tenured faculty were slightly under-represented.

The respondents recognized that some opportunities to discuss departmental vision are more productive than others. Almost half the respondents, for example, expressed some skepticism about mandated conversations which require them to outline an ideal departmental vision, particularly without any additional resources. As one respondent lamented, sometimes the University asks the faculty to create long-term plans independent of any current decision-making opportunities. "[The University's strategic planning process] treats vision as something that can be isolated from specific decisions that need to be made. That's a problem and it's the basis for a resentment for strategic planning." Generally, the faculty implied that *serious* discussions about departmental vision are initiated by themselves, not others.

Some of the respondents' suggested issues and events occur regularly, others infrequently. For example, collegiate administrators typically schedule formal departmental reviews at least five years apart. Yet, other issues may surface at almost any time or within shorter intervals. One department may unexpectedly find itself searching for a replacement DEO, while another may elect to re-evaluate its research and academic programs yearly because of frequent changes in the discipline. Furthermore, some departments may find a few of the issues irrelevant or less significant. Not all departments, for example, seek professional accreditation, and some are less dependent upon external funding. Regardless of which issues in Table 1 are more salient to a particular department, the faculty implied there are sufficient natural opportunities during the

normal course of academic life to discuss and re-evaluate their departmental visions.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

It is generally understood, for example, that the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for DEOs and faculty are influenced by both institutional type and academic discipline (Seagren et al., 1993). While I attempted to control partially for the latter by selecting faculty from different disciplines, it was not feasible to conduct this study at more than one site. All the respondents were from only one higher education institution, a public research university. This was a delimitation. I also purposely restricted my sample to faculty from eight academic departments. At best, then, these findings would apply to similar faculty, within similar disciplinary clusters, at other large Midwestern public research universities.

The limitations of this study are primarily associated with my methods of data collection and analysis. For example, potential researcher bias is a concern. In interviewing, the researcher becomes the primary instrument of data collection. The interviewer both consciously and unconsciously filters what he or she attends to and records. Although it may help to have an audio or video recording of the interview, the researcher is still the one who evaluates, edits, and categorizes the data.

Likewise, it is subjective work to analyze qualitative data. Feldman (1995, p. 64) cautioned that qualitative researchers, in particular, need to learn to get away from pre-established interpretations, whether from the views of those being studied or from the views of other researchers and theorists who are studying similar phenomena. I would add that researchers also need to be aware of how their own preconceptions may affect the entire process. Vigilant researchers will attempt to keep focused on the actual data and avoid pre-established interpretations or speculation.

Discussion & Prospective Views

The findings in this study should interest a variety of scholars and practitioners. Three such groups stand out: leadership and organizational scholars, researchers who study faculty and higher education institutions, and higher education leaders and policy makers.

Since vision usually is associated with the corporate world, leadership and organizational scholars may find it helpful to know how academics understand the concept. The thirty-two faculty in this study provide[d] one such glimpse. Their definitions of vision were surprisingly similar. The respondents not only agreed with each other, but with the scholars who write about vision. Despite a few suggestions here and there, the

faculty approved of the components on the vision handout. Proposition #1, then, should provide future researchers with a more formal definition of "An Organizational Vision."

Not much is known about vision within organizational subunits. This study not only looked at vision in an unusual setting, academia, but also at a different organizational level, the academic department. When scholars write about vision, they typically are referring to the over-riding vision for the entire organization. In contrast, I specifically looked at departmental vision since departments are the basic academic components of most colleges and universities. The tie between a subunit's vision and a larger unit's vision must be recognized, though. Despite their support for this type of vision, most faculty mentioned at some point in their interviews that departments are subunits with a limited ability to accomplish their dreams on their own because much of the power and resources lie at the collegiate level. Consequently, the faculty appear most willing to talk about departmental vision when they perceive, as a group, they have the power and resources to make a difference. Proposition #3, about the best times for vision conversations, seems remarkably sensible when one considers not only the time and effort involved in academic decision making but the strong ties between most departmental and collegiate visions.

Organizational scholars also might want to note that departmental visions appear to differ from corporate visions in an interesting way. Organizations in the business world often include references to "improved customer service" in their corporate visions. One reason to do this is to distinguish their organization from competitors who offer like products or services. No one in this study, however, mentioned the delivery aspect of education. Perhaps this is because faculty have a great deal of professional autonomy in that area, especially at research universities. These respondents implied (by omission) that departmental visions highlight the "what" not the "how." The content of departmental visions warrants further investigation.

Higher education researchers should find interesting that an overwhelming majority of the respondents argued that departmental visions can be useful. The higher education literature, unfortunately, often has depicted research faculty in a negative light. For example, they are not thought to be team players or people who are particularly loyal to their departments or institutions. Instead, thoughts of personal reputation and standing in the discipline take precedence. Yet, these findings indicate that research faculty *are* concerned about their departments' reputation and vitality. They expressed a clear desire for a cohesive shared vision for their departments.

Academic deans and DEOs need to recognize that although university faculty believe departmental visions can be useful, they do not like mandated conversations. There is a strong

cultural assumption that faculty should initiate the vision conversations, not others. Moreover, the faculty prefer to tie vision discussions to natural opportunities such as current decision-making opportunities. That would be a good time to inquire: "How does this decision fit into our/your departmental vision?"

One example of a mandated conversation is the University's strategic planning process. Although nearly everyone mentioned the topic at some point, eighteen respondents volunteered a clear opinion about its usefulness. Four faculty asserted that strategic planning conversations can be useful, another four had mixed feelings, and ten did not find the process useful at all. Their chief complaint about this type of a mandated conversation is that it is isolated from decision making. Institutional goals and plans seem logical to the faculty. However, the faculty intimated that preparing a complementary departmental plan is onerous and unnecessary unless there is a real opportunity to change something.

Occasionally, a mandated conversation may be unavoidable. In that case, academic leaders will need to convince the faculty of its importance. If previously mandated vision conversations and reports did not lead to an obvious change, the faculty will be cynical of current attempts. The moral is quite simple: academic leaders should not ask for a departmental vision if they are not in a position to support the faculty's ideas.

And, finally, although this study was not intended as a test of the Biglan model of academic clusters, some useful information has come to light. Faculty, regardless of their disciplinary affiliation, hold common views about how to define vision, the usefulness of departmental visions, and vision articulation. It is only in the area of vision development that some faculty views varied by disciplinary affiliation (Cunneen, 1995). Clearly, follow-up research about disciplinary affiliation and departmental vision holds the most promise in the area of vision development.

Looking forward, there are several interesting avenues for future research on departmental vision. First, the propositions reported in this paper need to be tested. Testing Proposition #1, the formal definition of organizational vision, would be a logical starting point. Second, there should be a search for additional variables which might affect faculty views on departmental vision. Third, research on departmental vision should be extended to other types of colleges and universities, and to other types of disciplinary faculties. Fourth, future researchers might want to formally explore the "typical" subject matter or contents of departmental visions. What general topics should a departmental vision cover? And finally, since a shared vision is extremely important to faculty, the concept of consensus also needs to be explored. How can it be fostered so a departmental vision truly is a shared vision?

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Appendix A

Biglan's Original Eight Academic Clusters

Hard-Nonlife-Pure (HNP)
Astronomy, Chemistry, Geology, Math, Physics
Hard-Nonlife-Applied (HNA)
Ceramic Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering
Hard-Life-Pure (HLP)
Botany, Entomology, Microbiology, Physiology, Zoology
Hard-Life-Applied (HLA)
Agronomy, Dairy Science, Horticulture, Agricultural Economics
Soft-Nonlife-Pure (SNP)
English, German, History, Philosophy, Russian, Communications
Soft-Nonlife-Applied (SNA)
Accounting, Finance, Economics
Soft-Life-Pure (SLP)
Anthropology, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology
Soft-Life-Applied (SLA)
Educational Administration & Supervision, Secondary and Continuing Education, Special Education, Vocational and Technical Education

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Appendix B

Decision Criteria for Selecting Departments

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1. Remove from consideration any departments with which the researcher has a strong, personal connection.
2. Favor departments with 15 or more tenure-track faculty.
3. Avoid departments with unusual faculty ratios across the tenure-track professorial ranks (i.e., Assistant, Associate, Full Professor).
4. Favor departments with formal, academic sub-programs.
5. Favor departments which have some variation in the Departmental Executive Officer's (DEO's) title and/or term length.
6. Favor departments which have better gender and/or minority representation among the faculty.

Appendix C

Selected Characteristics of the Eight Departments

Biglan Codes	
Hard Departments	(n = 3; HLP, HNP, HNA)
Soft Departments	(n = 4; SLA, SNA, SLP, SNP)
Life Departments	(n = 3; HLP, SLA, SLP)
Nonlife Departments	(n = 4; SNA, HNP, HNA, SNP)
Pure Departments	(n = 4; HLP, HNP, SLP, SNP)
Applied Departments	(n = 3; SLA, SNA, HNA)
Unclassified Department	(n = 1; XXX)
College Affiliation	
Liberal Arts	(n = 5), Engineering (n = 1)
Business	(n = 1), Education (n = 1)
Departmental Executive Officer's (DEO's) Title	
Chair, Chairman or Chairperson	(n = 6)
Head or Director	(n = 2)
Departmental Executive Officer's (DEO's) Standard Term Length	
3 Years	(n = 5), 5 Years (n = 2), Open (n = 1)
Number of Tenure-Track Faculty	
11 to 20 faculty	(n = 2), 21 to 30 (n = 3)
31 to 40	(n = 1), 41 or more (n = 2)
Mean = 31 Faculty	

* n = The number of departments.

Appendix D

Selected Characteristics of the Respondents

Gender	
Female	(n = 7), Male (n = 25)
Ethnicity	
Asian-American	(n = 2), White-Hispanic (n = 1)
White or Caucasian	(n = 29)
Academic Rank	
Assistant	(n = 8), Associate (n = 9), Full (n = 15)
Tenure Status	
Untenured	(n = 9), Tenured (n = 23)
Faculty Experience in Higher Education	
Range:	0.5 to 38 years, Mean: 15.3 years
Mode:	7 years (n = 3), Median: 14.5 years
Academic Administrative Experience	
None	(n = 17), Some (n = 15)
Range of "Some":	1 to 9 years
Mean of "Some":	4.97 years

Appendix E

The Twelve Subgroup Variables

Specific Biglan Cluster	
HLP, SLA, SNA, XXX, HNP, HNA, SLP, SNP	(n = 8 depts.)
Biglan's Hard-Soft Dimension	
Hard: HLP, HNP, HNA	(n = 12 faculty)
Soft: SLA, SNA, SLP, SNP	(n = 16 faculty)
Biglan's Life-Nonlife Dimension	
Life: HLP, SLA, SLP	(n = 12 faculty)
Nonlife: SNA, HNP, HNA, SNP	(n = 16 faculty)
Biglan's Pure-Applied Dimension	
Pure: HLP, HNP, SLP, SNP	(n = 16 faculty)
Applied: SLA, SNA, HNA	(n = 12 faculty)
Academic Rank	
Assistant Professor	(n = 8 faculty)
Associate Professor	(n = 9 faculty)
Full Professor	(n = 15 faculty)
Gender	
Female	(n = 7 faculty)
Male	(n = 25 faculty)
Departmental Executive Officer (DEO) Status	
No, Not a DEO	(n = 24 faculty)
Yes, Currently a DEO	(n = 8 faculty)
Tenure Status	
Tenured	(n = 23 faculty)
Untenured	(n = 9 faculty)
Academic Administrative Experience	
None	(n = 17 faculty)
Some	(n = 15 faculty)
Higher Education Experience as a Faculty Member	
Department Size (Number of Tenure-Track Faculty)	
11 to 20 faculty	(n = 2 depts.; n = 8 faculty)
21 to 30 faculty	(n = 3 depts.; n = 12 faculty)
31 to 40 faculty	(n = 1 dept.; n = 4 faculty)
41 or more faculty	(n = 2 depts.; n = 8 faculty)
Term Length of Departmental Executive Officer (DEO)	
Three-Year Term	(n = 5 depts.; n = 20 faculty)
Five-Year Term	(n = 2 depts.; n = 8 faculty)
Open-Ended Term	(n = 1 dept.; n = 4 faculty)

Appendix F
THE VISION HANDOUT

An Effective Vision ...

1) Is a mental image

2) It is future oriented

3) It is built on the present

4) It describes something attractive or better for your organization

5) It highlights what is important or distinctive

6) It motivates and empowers people

7) It is realistic and credible

8) It is both specific and general

9) It is malleable

TABLE 1

Issues or Events Which Tend to Prompt a Discussion of Departmental Vision

Curricular & Teaching	n = 24*
Hiring New Faculty	n = 18
The University's Strategic Planning Process	n = 16
Research Opportunities	n = 14
Funding Sources	n = 9
The Official Departmental Review Process	n = 8
Future Students	n = 5
Faculty Roles	n = 4
Technological Needs	n = 3
Accreditation	n = 3
Selecting a New Departmental Executive Officer	n = 2
The Use of Departmental Staff and Facilities	n = 2
Faculty Service Obligations	n = 1
The Curriculum vs. Future Employment	n = 1
Faculty Moral and Academic Standards	n = 1
Departmental Administrative Policies	n = 1
Selecting a Departmental Planning Committee	n = 1
Departmental Precedents and Principles	n = 1
Evaluating the Departmental Executive Officer	n = 1

* n = The number of respondents who mentioned this item.